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February 16, 2012

{Restaurant Address}

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you because your company is one of the leading fast food restaurants in the United States serving beef, pork, and poultry. As you may know, the majority of American consumers are concerned about food safety, and most of them worry about meat contamination.¹ In the past year alone, we have had more outbreaks of antibiotic-resistant *Salmonella* associated with contaminated meat and poultry than any other year, leaving behind a trail of victims that cannot be treated with common antibiotics.

Every year, two million Americans acquire bacterial infections during their hospital stay, and 100,000 die from them – the vast majority due to antibiotic-resistant pathogens.² Drug resistance prolongs the length, cost, and severity of the illness. Antibiotic-resistant infections are estimated to cost the U.S. healthcare system in excess of \$20 billion every year.³ This is a major public health crisis, and yet antibiotics important for human health are used regularly and with little oversight in animal agriculture.

In 2009, the Food and Drug Administration released data revealing that 80 percent of antibiotics sold in the United States were sold for use in food animals not humans – most of these antibiotics were fed to healthy animals.^{4,5} Decades of research has shown that the practice of routinely feeding antibiotics to swine, cows, and chickens harms human health by contributing to diseases that fail drug treatment. A National Academy of Sciences report stated that, “a decrease in the inappropriate use of antimicrobials in human medicine alone is not enough [to slow the increase in antibiotic

¹ “National Survey of Healthcare Consumers: Food Safety.” Thomson Reuters, 2010.

² www.cdc.gov

³ Roberts, R.R. *et al.* “Hospital and Societal Costs of Antimicrobial-Resistant Infections in a Chicago Teaching Hospital: Implications for Antibiotic Stewardship.” *Clin Infect Dis.* (2009) 49(8):1175-1184.

⁴ “Summary Report on Antimicrobials Sold or Distributed for Use in Food-Producing Animals.” U.S. Food and Drug Administration Center for Veterinary Medicine, 2009.

⁵ Loglisci, R. “New FDA Numbers Reveal Food Animals Consume Lion’s Share of Antibiotics.” Center for a Livable Future. Dec 23, 2010. (www.livablefutureblog.com).

resistance]. Substantial efforts must be made to decrease inappropriate misuse in animals and agriculture as well.”⁶

Federal agencies, public health organizations, scientists, and American consumers are united by their concern over the misuse of antibiotics in agriculture and its implications for human health.

As the only microbiologist in Congress, I have been working to address this public health problem for years. Today I seek your assistance in clarifying the extent to which the fast food industry sources its meat and poultry from companies that routinely use antibiotics to raise livestock and poultry, and whether public education efforts about this health issue could be enhanced. As a leader in the industry, you have the market power to address this looming problem. For this reason, I would like to know what choices your company makes regarding meat and poultry purchases, and I respectfully request that you provide this information by **June 15th, 2012**.

1. Please describe your current policies on purchasing meat and poultry produced with antibiotics, and how compliance with these policies is assured.
2. Please describe how or if you educate consumers about your meat and poultry purchasing policies regarding antibiotic use in production.
3. Please provide the percentages of beef, pork, and poultry that your company purchases that are produced without any antibiotics. Please provide a figure for each category of meat. “Without any antibiotics” means that antibiotics have not been used for any reason in the animal’s life, or, in the case of poultry, injection of the egg with antibiotics before hatching.
4. Please provide the percentages of beef, pork, and poultry that your company purchases that are produced in a manner that includes antibiotics only for disease treatment. Please provide a figure for each category of meat. “Disease treatment” means treatment of sick animals. It does not include antibiotics used for growth promotion, feed efficiency, disease prevention, or disease control.
5. Please provide the percentages of beef, pork, and poultry that your company purchases that are produced in a manner that includes antibiotics only for treatment and control of disease. Please provide a figure for each category of meat. “Treatment and control of disease” means treatment of sick animals and treatment of animals that have been exposed to documented disease. It does not include antibiotics used for growth promotion, feed efficiency, disease prevention, or, in the case of poultry, injection of the egg with antibiotics before hatching.

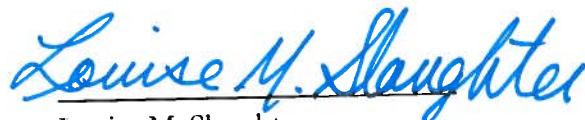
⁶ Smolinski, MS. *et al.* “Microbial Threats to Health: Emergence, Detection, and Response.” Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2003.

6. Please provide the percentages of beef, pork, and poultry that your company purchases that are produced in a manner that includes the routine use of antibiotics. Please provide a figure for each category of meat. "Routine use of antibiotics" means any use of an antibiotic in the absence of disease. This includes use for growth promotion, feed efficiency, and disease prevention.
7. Please inform us as to any planned changes in policy regarding the use of antibiotics to produce meat purchased by your company due to human health concerns or consumer demand.

You are also welcome to include any clarifying information that you think may be useful to American consumers.

Thank you very much for your careful review of these requests for information. I look forward to your response by **June 15th, 2012**. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Carolyn Shore in my office at 202-225-3615 or carolyn.shore@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter
MEMBER OF CONGRESS